

# ResultsPlus

## Examiners' Report January 2010

### GCE Religious Studies 6RS01

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## **General Comments**

Centres are again to be congratulated on their teaching and preparation for these public examinations. It is encouraging to see such a wide range of material that is presented in answering these questions that are themselves on such a varied area of subjects within Religious Studies. This demonstrates yet again the commitment and determination of both students and teachers in our schools and colleges.

There were many examples of high quality work achieving full marks, however some candidates did not shape the material they had learned to address the question directly, especially in regard to the evaluative parts of the question. Centres should encourage candidates to look at the AO2 part of these questions.

## Philosophy

### Question 1(a)

(i) This was a very popular question. Good answers tackled both the strengths and the weaknesses evenly. There was a variety of approaches: some analysed the analogical argument or the argument to design in great detail; others wove a thread through the various forms of the argument and the different objections. A small minority of candidates did not have enough detail or depth when it came to spelling out the nature of the argument and the force of objections. For example, some only explained the key features of the theory and did not refer to either the strengths or the weaknesses. There were a number of excellent answers which clearly identified Paley's contribution of an analogy and then progressed to discuss a wider range of versions to great effect. Weaknesses identified by Dawkins and Hume were well presented by some candidates.

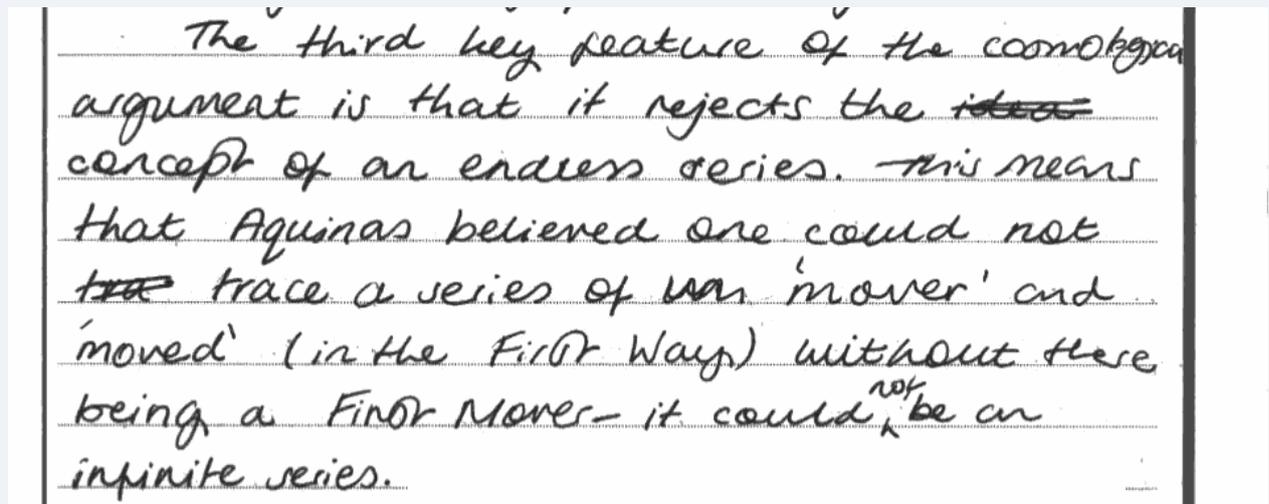
(ii) Some candidates struggled to justify or sustain an argument in AO2, they did not refer to whether it was inconclusive as a proof for the existence of God.

Good responses addressed the word 'inconclusive' and assessed the form of the argument (analogical / inductive) as inconclusive or gave reasons why the argument seemed convincing but not conclusive. They were able to refer back to weaknesses previously identified and use this as a foundation for justifying a clear judgement. Most were able to identify the problem of a posteriori proofs being inconclusive.

Overall, the argument does a good attempt in ~~the~~ responding and overcoming criticism, especially in Swinburne's 'Temporal Order' where he argues that the natural laws were specifically adapted to life. It weakens ~~the idea~~ Dawkins's belief that we are all here by ~~essentially~~ chance, as that, in itself, could be seen as a far-fetched ~~belief~~ thing to believe. As for it being inconclusive, I would say that all it does is reinforce and establish beliefs instead of coming to an actual conclusion about whether God exists or not.

### Question 1(b)

(i) Good candidates kept the phrase 'key features' in mind throughout the answer. Some analysed these features one by one e.g. causality in the Kalaam and Aquinas; and the infinite regress and so on. Others examined the key features of the different forms of the argument including more modern forms in Coplestone and McCabe. Fewer students seemed to rely solely on Aquinas's three ways. Stronger answers tended to move on from him through Leibniz and Lane to the Craig/Kalaam argument.



The third key feature of the cosmological argument is that it rejects the ~~idea~~ concept of an endless series. This means that Aquinas believed one could not ~~the~~ trace a series of ~~was~~ 'movers' and 'moved' (in the First Way) without there being a First Mover - it could <sup>not</sup> be an infinite series.

(ii) Some candidates need to remember that a list of objections is not evaluation and should rather use the different objections to evaluate the key features of part (i). Many students did try to address the idea of it being a weak argument, but there were some candidates who really did not come to any conclusion on this.

**Question 2(a)**

(i) Most answers concentrated on the logical problem. Good answers analysed the problem and showed awareness of the issues in defining omnipotence and omniscience. These candidates gave detail and analysis of the Augustinian or Irenaean theodicies and some offered Buddhist solutions. They also analysed the significance of the detail in these theodicies. A number of weaker responses argued that atheism or the inconsistent triad were solutions to the problem of suffering for a believer! Others attempted to respond with the idea of suffering as a test of faith without referring to any scholarly contributions.

(ii) In the alternative responses, lots of students wrote very lengthy responses, and did not allow themselves enough time to really evaluate the two properly, although those that did understand the question wrote some very impressive answers. Weaker responses simply gave the alternative theodicy and added a sentence at the end stating but not justifying why one was better than the other. There were some excellent responses which questioned whether Process Theodicy was actually a theodicy and used this to conclude that Augustine or Irenaeus were therefore better solutions.

Here is one candidate's final sentence.

*Overall the Augustinian theodicy is a better response for conservative Christians as it demonstrates Biblical belief, and Irenaeus is better suited to liberal Christians as it is scientific.*

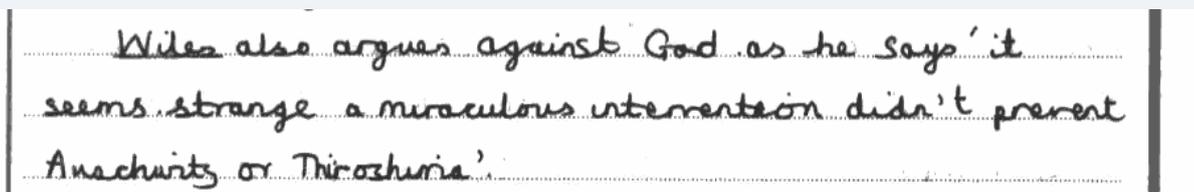
(Quote from whitemail)

**Question 2(b)**

(i) This is still a less popular question than the other three, and many responses did not actually address the question which required an analysis of the definitions and an examination of the philosophical reasons for believing in miracles. Most students were able to give a few definitions of evil, mostly the standard ones - Hume, Aquinas, Holland and Swinburne. Only a few candidates were able to offer positive, philosophical reasons for believing in miracles. Weaker candidates simply avoided the issue. Many responses detailed Hume's critiques in part a instead of part b. Better responses referred to Swinburne's principle of credulity - though few named it.

(ii) Most were able to discuss the extent to which criticisms such as Hume's four criticisms and the unfairness of some miracles undermine belief but few identified Hume's problem of why significant testimony is required to justify believing a natural law has been broken. Even if some miracles were established some candidates debated the moral issue demonstrated by Platina's use of Maurice Wiles. For example, one candidate wrote:

*It seems strange a miraculous intervention didn't prevent an Auschwitz or a Hiroshima.*

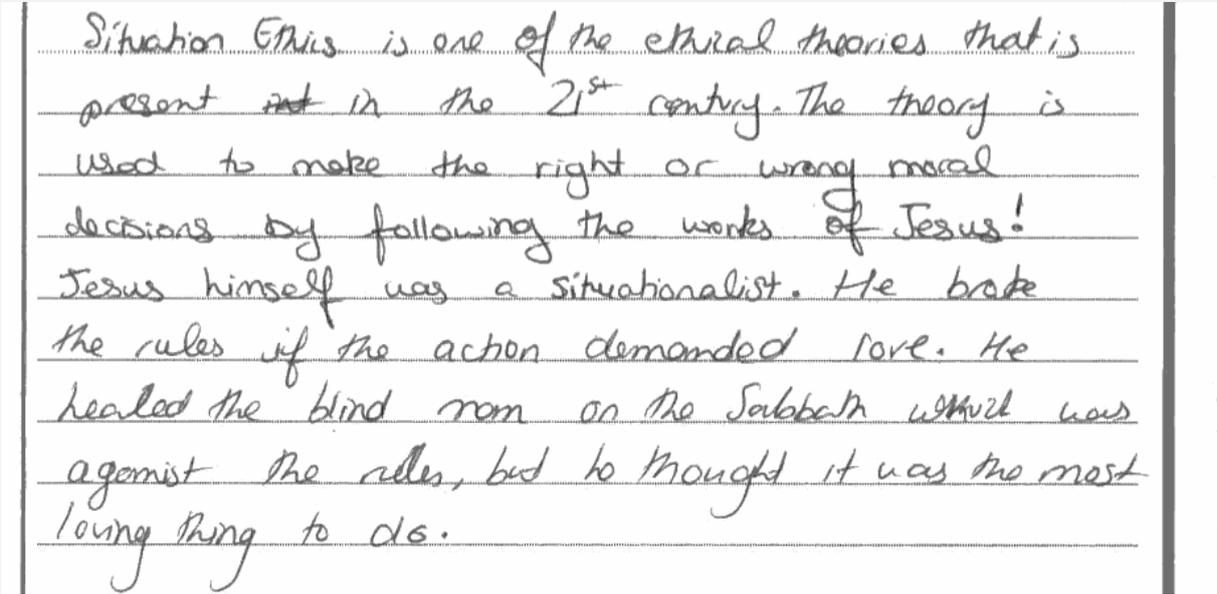


*Wiles also argues against God as he says 'it seems strange a miraculous intervention didn't prevent Auschwitz or Hiroshima.'*

## Ethics

### Question 3(a)

(i) This question produced some strong responses and most candidates went for the obvious route of the four working principles and the six fundamental propositions. Some candidates focused on agape love and did not seem able to move past this. Candidates tended to focus on the teleological nature of Situation Ethics and its rejection of a legalist approach. Weaker candidates relied on examples with little or no analysis to answer this question. Such candidates were unable to grasp the key principles and concepts of the theory. Some claimed that Jesus was himself a situationist.



Situation Ethics is one of the ethical theories that is present in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The theory is used to make the right or wrong moral decisions by following the works of Jesus! Jesus himself was a situationist. He broke the rules if the action demanded love. He healed the blind man on the Sabbath which was against the rules, but he thought it was the most loving thing to do.

(ii) Some candidates focused on the weaknesses of it being a teleological theory and the difficulties in predicting outcomes. Other candidates gave a fuller explanation of why the ethic has failed to successfully establish itself, including some of the objections offered by religious moralists. Some candidates used Barclay's critique of the theory.

### Question 3(b)

(i) This appeared to be the most popular choice of question and good candidates recognised that this theory is teleological and relativistic and understood the key differences between the qualitative and quantitative versions of the theory, usually framing their answers in the social context of Utilitarianism. Whilst the majority of candidates demonstrated good knowledge of Bentham and Mill there were some answers that went beyond them. Preference and/or negative utilitarianism were mentioned by some candidates, however some were unable to evaluate or expand on them or their proponents. A sizable proportion of candidates were able to list some of the seven criteria of the hedonic calculus but were sometimes unable to show their understanding of these criteria. Some candidates confused Act and Rule utilitarianism.

(ii) Some candidates treated this question as if it was just asking for "strengths and weaknesses" of Utilitarianism as AO1; they went on to list the strengths and weaknesses of the theory but did not evaluate whether the weaknesses outweighed its strengths. Weaknesses identified were sometimes general problems associated with a teleological theory; for example the difficulty predicting outcomes. Many argued that as a personal ethic the theory has significant weaknesses, but it would be effective to identify a number of social improvements achieved by Bentham. This opening paragraph was the start of a strong Ao2 response.

(ii) Although Mill looked to address the weaknesses in Bentham's original theory, many still remained. For example Simon Blackburn looked at the idea of democracy and realised that U'sm did not take into account the separateness and uniqueness of the individual and ignored the interests of the minority. G.E. Moore also states that U'sm commits the naturalistic fallacy in the jump from 'is' to 'ought' or 'epistemology' to 'ethics'. W.D. Ross highlights the fact that it completely discounts 'Primum Facie' duties, in that if we could better the pleasures of the majority to the detriment of a loved one then that's what we should do when we know that this would not ~~be~~ happen. This also highlights that you must take a very cold and impersonal view for the theory to work. MacIntyre highlights the fact that U'sm needs a deontological framework to succeed.

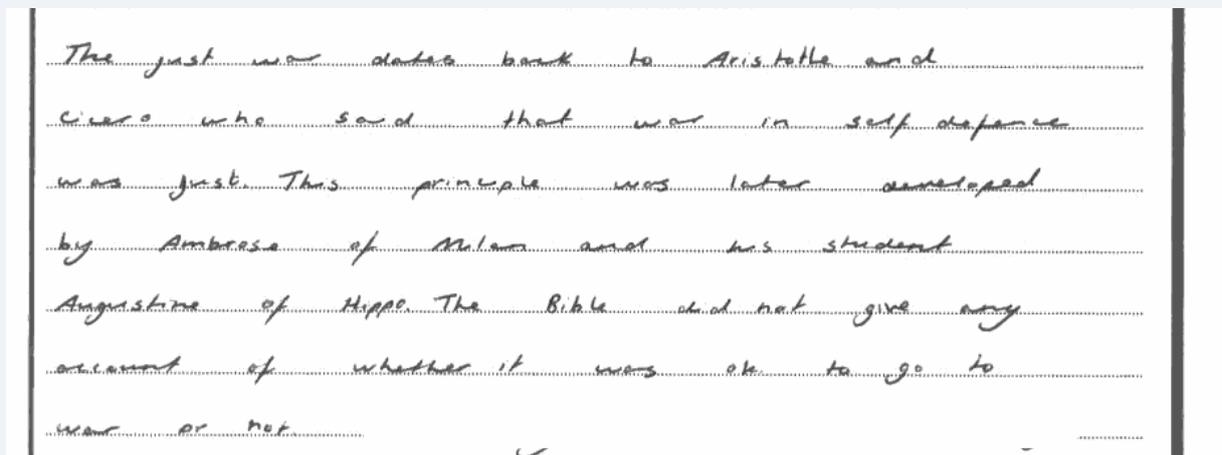
### Question 4(a)

(i) In general this question was answered well.

Most candidates were able to trace the historical origins of the Augustinian theory and reasons for its development. Some candidates chose to describe the Islamic condition for war. On the whole such answers were detailed and thorough. The answers on pacifism described the various types of pacifism, although some did not explain the theoretical justification for pacifism; namely the deontological and teleological justifications for the position, which characterised the 20th century debates within the movement. Some of the more able candidates contextualised these theories well and were able to give their origins along with some reasons for the development of the ideas.

(ii) Weaker candidates did not connect these ideas with religious teaching other than a simple reference to the teaching of Jesus for Pacifism and some Old Testament references for Just War. However some more able candidates clearly set them both within their respective contexts and were able to offer balanced assessments of the religious beliefs on war and pacifism, identifying core doctrines which would influence and shape attitudes. Some candidates struggled to see that both ideas were religious in origin despite mentioning Augustine and Aquinas in the first part.

Here a candidate, who scored full marks, after an introductory paragraph of definition, begins an historical analysis:



The just war dates back to Aristotle and  
Cicero who said that war in self defence  
was just. This principle was later developed  
by Ambrose of Milan and his student  
Augustine of Hippo. The Bible did not give any  
account of whether it was ok to go to  
war or not.

**Question 4(b)**

(i) Some candidates were able to focus on one dilemma and offered resolutions effectively.

However many were confused as to what a sexual dilemma actually was and did not answer the question. Candidates need to be reminded that sexual ethics is not itself a dilemma. Homosexuality seemed to be the most popular dilemma. Many candidate responses did not contain enough analysis but heavily relied upon generalisations and at times misrepresentation.

Some set their stall out clearly in the first sentence:



i) A dilemma in Sexual Ethics is the act of sex before marriage. Before the sexual revolution, this act was very much frowned upon by society, mainly due to the teachings of the Church.

(ii) Some candidates simply wrote that religious approaches were out of date in regard to sexual ethics. In the second part of the question candidates usually gave a for and against argument. Some candidates argued that as we live in a secular society, religion is no longer needed. The answer could have referred to many aspects of Sexual Ethics, some candidates just referred to the dilemma they had chosen for part a.

## Buddhism

### **Question 5(a)**

- (i) There were some very thorough answers on the contexts prior to the time of Buddha.
- (ii) The most able candidates explained how selected features were adapted by Buddha, others simply identified which were rejected and which were adapted.

### **Question 5(b)**

- (i) Some candidates went for the biographical approach telling Buddha's life story with little focus on how the events related to the teaching of Buddha about the Middle Way
- (ii) Many candidates demonstrated a good range of material that was closely focused upon the question.

### **Question 6(a)**

- (i) Candidates had a good understanding of the meaning of 'refuge' but sometimes did not write fluently about the links between the refuges. Candidates need to focus more closely on the interrelationships between the Buddha, the Sangha and the Dharma in the Three Refuges.
- (ii) Some candidates struggled with significance, detailing descriptive rather than evaluative writing.

**Question 6(b)**

(i) Candidates reflected detailed knowledge and good understanding and were generally of a very good standard.

(ii) Answers demonstrated a good range of material that was closely focused upon the question.

Here a candidate who attained full marks after an opening paragraph begins to analyse Samatha meditation:

Samatha meditation is the first, this type of meditation is not exclusive to Buddhism and helps develop a deep calm and concentration. The main type of samatha meditation is anapanisati meditation, which is the focus on breathing to achieve the deep sense of calm and concentration to gain insight you must overcome the 5 hindrances of, senses, ill will, emotions, ~~actions~~ <sup>Tiredness</sup> and doubt when you have done this you can achieve a state of joy known as a jhana where you start to gain insight into the way things are. Samatha meditation should take place with a good friend or elder in order to help symbolize the dillusion of non self.

## Christianity

### Question 7(a)

(i) There were few answers to this question. There were some good attempts to deal with the issues in the Reformation period and also some within the modern period.

Barth ~~was~~ responded to ~~the~~ his liberal Protestant ~~teaching~~ and the allegiance the Germans attempted to make between God ~~and~~ Jesus and Nazism. He is most famous for his Barmen Declaration in which he rejected the influence of Nazism and affirmed that the Jesus Christ we know today from the Cross is enough to make him resist Lord Führer. He defends Chalcedon and the importance of both Jesus' natures. He also rejects the Calvinist ideas of election and maintains that ~~God~~ God would not ~~make~~ make one part of himself more definite than the life and work, teaching and redemption of Jesus Christ. He rejects Biblical Inerrancy as a basis for religion as he says to use a basis other than Jesus is wrong. God is revealed to us through Jesus, not through mental concepts of scripture. Barth was particularly interested in the doctrine of the Trinity and ~~redeems~~ redeems the idea from its putative loss in Trinitarian Theology. He claims the Trinitarian Theology defends monotheism by defining different attributes of God.

(ii) The example below shows an understanding of the significance of these teachings, relating Jesus to particular cultures

b) The modern teachings were particularly important as they allied Jesus with particular cultures. Christians who were oppressed, for example during the black Civil Rights movement would find this particularly helpful and would enable them to sustain their faith and hope for a more promising future. It proves the appeal of Jesus to all cultures and makes him accessible to all.

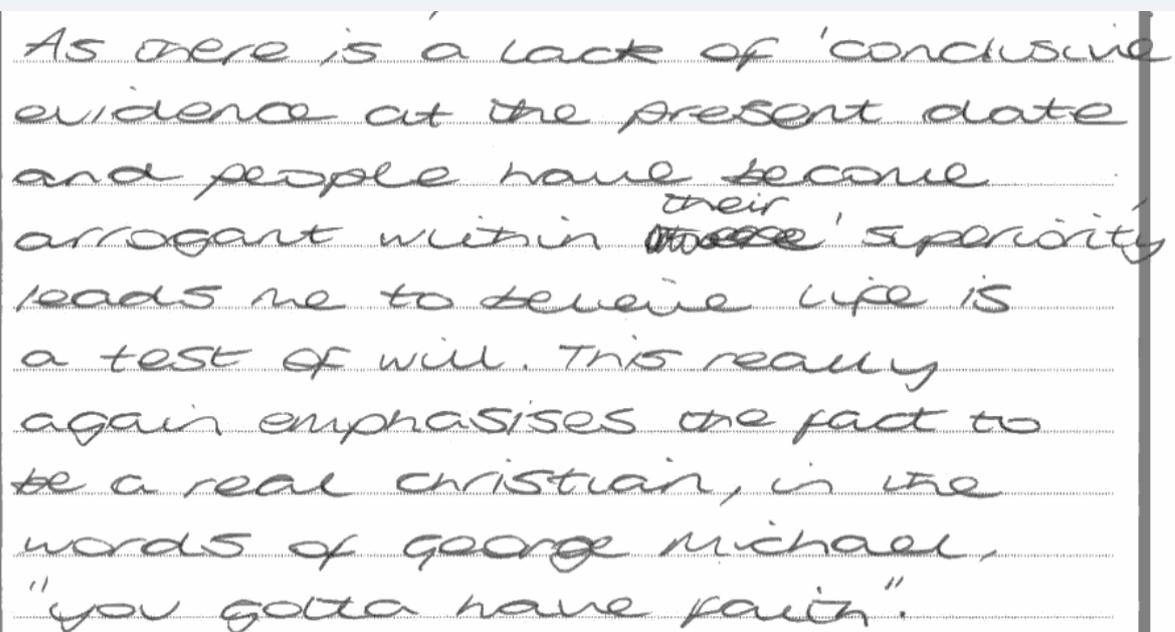
### Question 7(b)

There were not many answers to this question

**Question 8(a)**

(i) There seemed to be a number of candidates who thought this was a philosophy of religion question about proving the existence of God or a science and religion question about the authenticity of the creation accounts in Genesis rather than a question on God as creator. Only some dealt with questions of God's continuing creative intervention, miracles, the image of God in man and creation ex nihilo. Some put evaluative comments here instead of in part (ii)

(ii) Some candidates focussed on the individual difficulty of Christians continuing to believe rather than the beliefs themselves being difficult to hold onto in this age. George Michael is offered here as an icon.



As there is a lack of 'conclusive evidence' at the present date and people have become arrogant within ~~the~~<sup>their</sup> 'superiority' leads me to believe life is a test of will. This really again emphasises the fact to be a real christian, in the words of George Michael, "you gotta have faith".

**Question 8(b)**

(i) This was the most popular question. Lengthy descriptions of all the details of baptisms including the types of pews did not reach high levels of attainment. Analysis of the practices and examination of them did. There is still some confusion about the difference between adult baptism and believer's baptism.

(ii) There were some very good answers which discussed the declarative or efficacious nature of sacraments and others who struggled to see any significance in the differences.

## Hinduism

### **Question 9(a)**

- (i) Some candidates produced sound and competent work on the key features of Indus Valley culture.
- (ii) Some candidates demonstrated that they had thought through the influences on it.

### **Question 9(b)**

- (i) Some candidates produced material dealing with the three distinctive features of the Vedic period which was well structured.
- (ii) Some were able to show the significance of the period for the development of Hindu beliefs.

### **Question 10**

There were very few answers for both questions 10a and 10b.

## Islam

### **Question 11(a)**

(i) Candidates achieving marks in the higher bands showed a good detailed knowledge of the historical and social context prior to the time of Muhammad and organised their material closely in line with the question. Many were able to support comments with examples and quotes from various scholars. Candidates achieving marks in the lower levels tended to list brief facts relating to the historical and social background of pre Islamic Arabia rather than examining them as required.

(ii) Those achieving marks in the higher bands demonstrated a good knowledge of Religion prior to the time of Muhammad and were able to show its significance for understanding the life of Muhammad in Mecca; considering reasons for his rejection; his attitude against certain practices and development of others. Those scoring low marks tended to make brief reference to religion prior to the time of Muhammad.

### **Question 11(b)**

(i) Candidates achieving marks in the higher bands reflected a good knowledge of the topic and used their material well; giving detail of the hijrah and life in Madinah within a framework that related closely to the question. This contrasted with work achieving marks in the lower bands that was mainly descriptive and biographical.

(ii) Most answers tried to focus on the question relating to the significance of Muhammad's life in Madinah for Muslims but those achieving marks in the higher levels contained greater depth, explanation and reference to scholars.

### **Question 12(a)**

(i) Some candidates showed a good knowledge of the teaching of the Qur'an and used it well to examine key ideas of the belief in life after death found in the six beliefs but others paraphrased the descriptive elements or listed them briefly.

(ii) Those candidates achieving marks in the higher levels demonstrated the significance of Akhirah for Muslims and how it related to their practices. Answers gaining marks in the lower levels were brief and generalised.

**Question 12(b)**

(i) This was a very popular question and although the standard was variable many presented competent work. Those achieving marks in the higher level demonstrated a good detailed knowledge of the five pillars and used their material well in examining distinctive ideas. Answers in the lower levels tended to be brief, descriptive and generalised.

The Zakah consists of giving 2.5% of their income after taking care of their family and paying off all debts, each year, these funds can also be used for community projects. In Surah 24:56 it states 'So establish regular prayer and give regular charities, and obey the Apostle, that ye may receive mercy'. This is from the Qur'an and is a message of Allah. 2.5% is the minimum to be donated, Muslims may also like to offer more such as Sadagah, known as voluntary contributions.

(ii) Answers achieving marks in the higher levels focused closely on the question of the significance of two pillars for Muslim belief and practice, often quoting from the Qur'an and scholars. Those in the lower levels tended to be brief and generalised; sometimes repeating comments or facts given in part (i).

**Judaism**

There were too few answers to compile a report for this section.

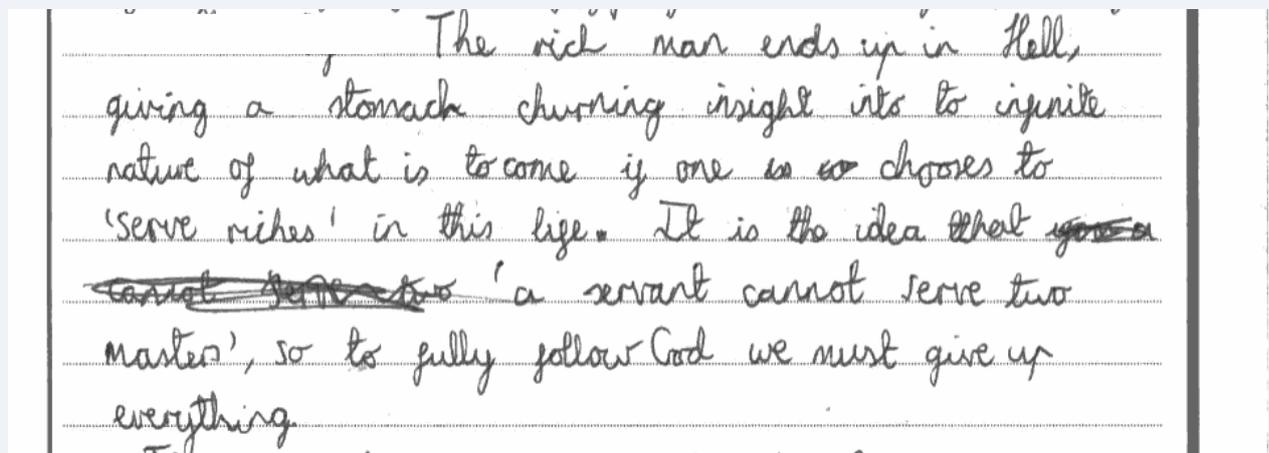
**Sikhism**

There were too few answers to compile a report for this section.

## New Testament

### Question 17(a)

(i) This question produced some strong responses particularly those candidates who offered the Fourth Gospel although there were also some excellent answers on Luke's treatment of wealth. Those candidates who had clearly been well prepared for this topic employed relevant scholarship to aid their discussion and a number of candidates also, as part of their responses, were able to offer examples without just repeating the narrative accounts from the relevant Gospel.



(ii) Most answers were able to make some relevant comment and evaluation.

**Question 17(b)**

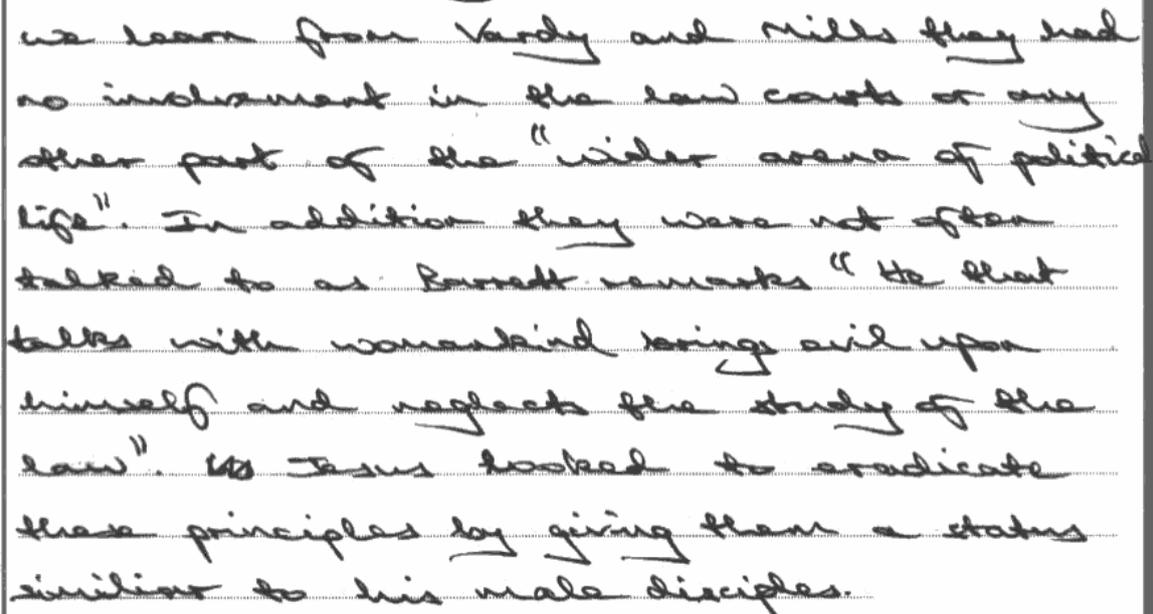
(i) Again the Fourth Gospel seemed to be the most popular and there were some very good answers which contained impressive engagement with relevant scholars. Christological connections in John's accounts were competently dealt with by a number of candidates. Many of the Luke answers seemed to be largely retelling the episodes without too much reference to the ministry of Jesus.

(ii) Most answers were largely relevant and contained some good insights to the role of miracles in the ministry of Jesus.

The miracles ~~of~~ Jesus teach us a great deal about the nature of Jesus both human and divine. John offers us an intriguing combination of high and low christology. At times Christ is portrayed as just an ordinary man, whereas at other times in the gospel he is described as the true divine messiah of the world. This helps his followers see Jesus as the saviour of the universe and lands of God. However, Jesus' human qualities help his followers understand his teachings and inspire them to live their lives in his light. It also shows ~~as~~ high Christ as a UNIVERSAL saviour who offers his teaching to all peoples. We see he performed miracles for the benefit of Galilee and Samaria because they showed faith and belief in his power and authority.

**Question 18(a)**

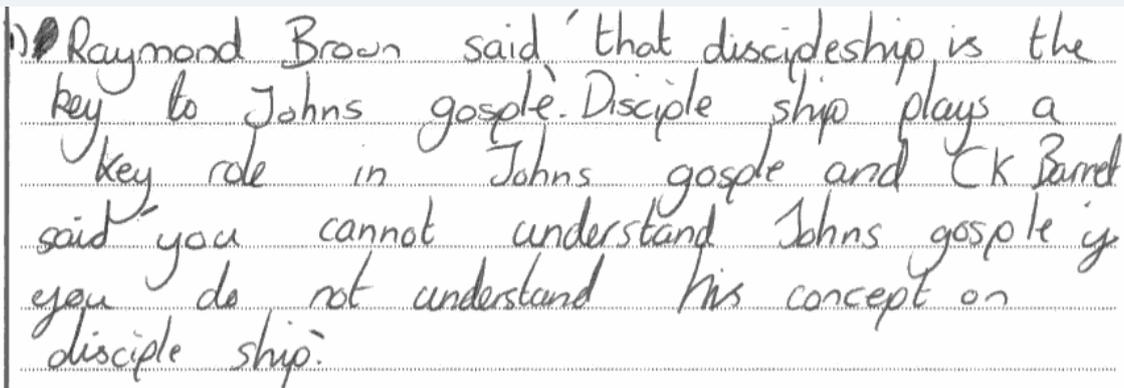
- (i) There were some good answers from the Fourth Gospel which went beyond the events themselves in terms of the overall significance for Jesus. Few candidates tackled Prayer and Praise in Luke.
- (ii) There were some good answers that were able to contextualise within the milieu at that time in history.



we learn from Vardy and Mills they had no involvement in the law courts or any other part of the "wider arena of political life". In addition they were not often talked to as Barrett remarks "He that talks with womankind brings evil upon himself and neglects the study of the law". As Jesus looked to eradicate these principles by giving them a status similar to his male disciples.

**Question 18(b)**

(i) Candidates engaged well with discipleship and some went beyond the simple calling of the twelve to drop everything and follow Jesus to offer a good theological discussion on the role of discipleship in general.



Raymond Brown said 'that discipleship is the key to Johns gosple. Disciple ship plays a key role in Johns gosple and CK Barrett said you cannot understand Johns gosple if you do not understand his concept on disciple ship.'

(ii) Here again answers tended to be at either end of the scale. Some appeared to have difficulty in understanding who the Holy Spirit was and struggled to relate the Holy Spirit directly to the ministry of Jesus. Some confined the Holy Spirit to the post resurrection empowerment.

## Grade Boundaries

### *6RS01: Unit 1 - Foundations*

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	63	56	49	43	37
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

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